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ABSTRACT

A description of a child's natural habits and characteristics during his third year is presented. Also given are suggestions for aiding his physical and mental development. (CK)

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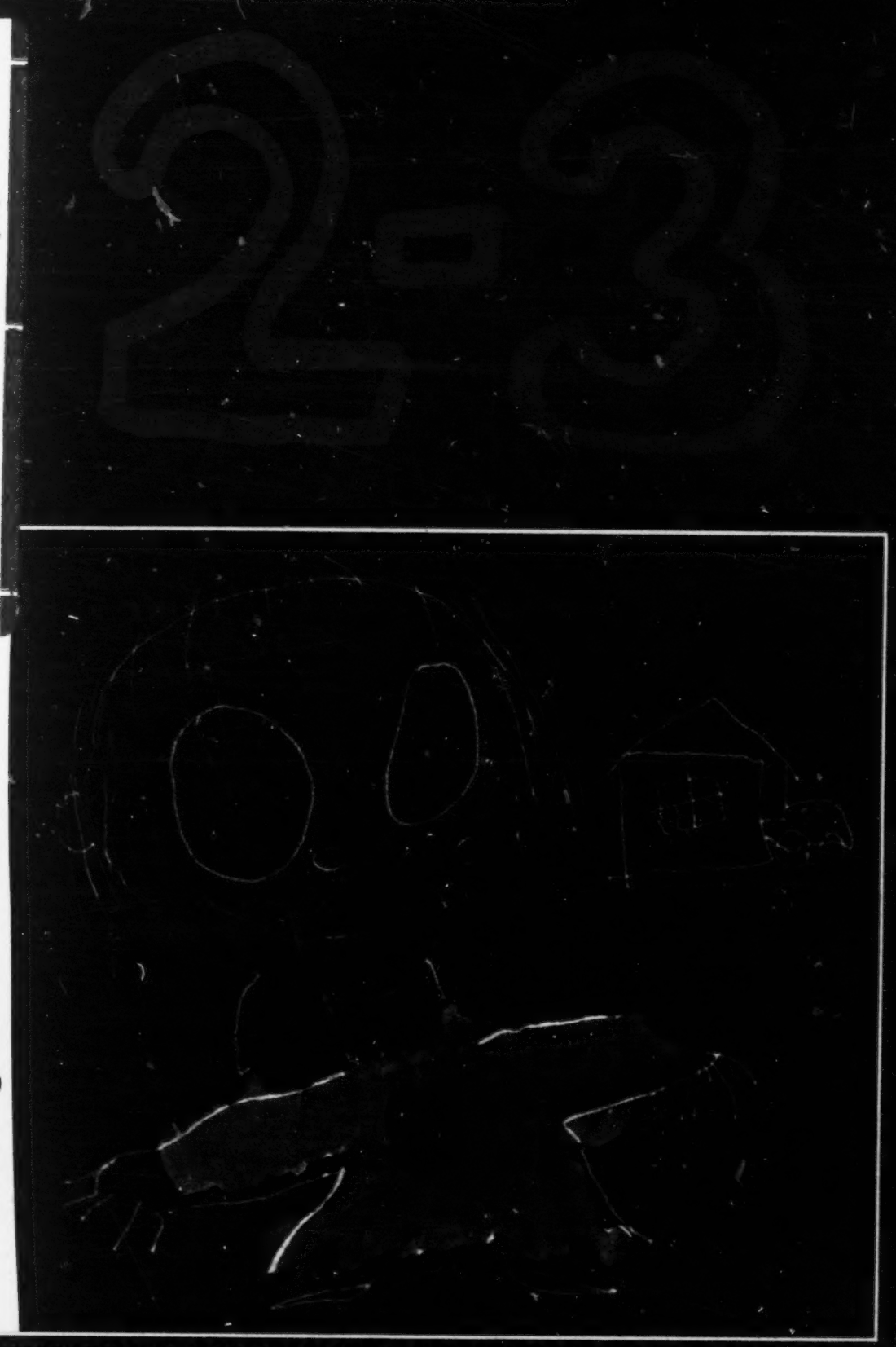
the Child from



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The child's third year is a time when you will observe many new and interesting changes in his development. He is gaining in awareness of the world around him. That "mind of his own," that already came into being in the year past, will show itself in a number of new ways—his contrariness, his love of saying "no" (even when he is not quite sure of what will happen as a result), and his desire to escape being "bossed"! But these are all signs of his growing independence, and this is good. At the same time, his personality expresses itself in other ways, too—his increasing ability to be sociable, and his great pleasure in being with *you,* his loved ones—all of which will make you love him and enjoy him more than ever.

But remember, he is still very young. Do not expect him to have good judgment yet. He still needs your guidance and protection to keep him happy, healthy, and safe.

And don't make comparisons between your child and others his age. Of course he will be different—every child is different from every other. What he needs most right now is the chance to be himself, to gain in independence, and to feel secure. Of course you are anxious for each new word and each fresh evidence of his progress. But remember, you are not entering your child in a race. He will grow and develop and learn and achieve at his own speed. Be proud of your child, and let him know it!

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the child from 2-3

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Talk with him:

The child between two and three will be acquiring an understanding of words, and the more words he learns to say the more he will love to talk. Talk with him and listen to him. Use simple language and short sentences and avoid "babytalk." Read to him, and tell him stories. When you are busy around the house, talk to him about what you are doing. Opportunities to be with other children will also encourage him to express himself in words.

Be sure he has enough to keep him occupied:

Generally speaking, busy children are happy children. A healthy child with plenty of freedom to roam about and plenty of interesting things to do and play with is less likely to misbehave. Think ahead about your child's day in the same way that you plan your own activities.

Play:

During the period from two to three, a child likes to do whatever the older people around him are doing. He will try to copy his parents' activities, and those of older brothers and sisters. A considerable amount of his play may be of this nature. Through this kind of activity he develops skills, and he comes to know how it feels to be a more grownup person.

Although he needs some time to himself, the two- to three-year-old also needs opportunities to be with other children. This is especially important for an only child. And he also needs opportunities to be with children near his own age. Older children may either overprotect him or take advantage of him, and he cannot keep up with them. Besides, older children can find it a nuisance to have younger ones around all the time.

When children this age are playing in the same place, have enough toys for each. Don't try to force them to share. They will be ready for this later. Also, the two-year-old is apt to be a grabber, and this is one reason that play between children this age always needs adult supervision. It is best not to scold when a child this age grabs another child's toy. Just give the toy back to the other child, and put something else in your child's hands for him to play with. And keep in mind that, even when he is playing by himself, the two-year-old enjoys being near other people who take an interest in what he is doing.

Even at this young age, and even in a small apartment or house, a

child should have a place to keep his own playthings. A cardboard carton can serve this purpose. Begin to teach the child to put away his things after he is through playing with them. Just before his noon meal and just before suppertime are good times to have him do this.

To understand the importance of play in a child's development, we need to realize that, in their play, young children are constantly exploring and discovering, learning new skills, and developing new capacities and new ideas. Through play, they develop their minds and their bodies.

Toys for the young child should be safe, sturdy, and not easily broken. Since much of their play is a reflection of the life around them, both boys and girls at this age enjoy cars and trucks and dolls and dolls' furniture. They should not be teased or ridiculed for their preferences. Other favorites are washable crayons and paper to color on, and blocks. Money invested in a good set of blocks for the two-year-old is money well spent, for he will continue to play with them and enjoy them for several years.

The young child needs plenty of fresh air and exercise. Provide plenty of opportunities for him to play outdoors in a safe place, where he will not get burned or overheated from the sun. He needs the chance to walk, run, climb, swing, dig, and throw. These activities help develop the large muscles of his arms and legs. He also needs play materials that let him learn about color, size, and shape. His experience with these will help develop the smaller muscles of his hands and eyes.

The child at this age also likes to push and pull things. A good-sized sturdy truck, made from scrap lumber and a set of wheels, can give him more pleasure than an expensive mechanical one. He can load it and unload it, and sit on it and make believe drive it. A sturdy wagon is another favorite for this age group.

Take him to a pool or to the ocean, but never, never, leave him unattended near any body of water. Even a shallow, plastic playpool can be dangerous. When he is near a swimming pool or in a boat or playing in the ocean, he should wear a life jacket until he can swim at least 100 feet. Swimming lessons for young children in Hawaii are money well invested, and 2 years is not too young to start.

Adults should avoid excessive roughhousing with a small child. He may not understand it and can become overexcited or frightened. But do take time to *play* with him He loves your attention, and in this way you will also get to know each other better.

Keep him away from harm:

Keep in mind that this is the age for accidents. The child this age still gets into everything and needs to be protected from his own curiosity. It is your job to keep him safe. Things that could harm him should be kept out of his reach, and your home and your dooryard should be safe places for him to play. When he *is* in danger, say "no-no" and move him quickly to a safe place. But do *not* expect him to remember what the "no-no" meant. He will learn eventually, but he is still much too young to really understand what danger is.

Also, you will save yourself and the child a lot of unnecessary frustration if you will put out of reach the things you absolutely don't want him to get into or break—your sewing box, your purse, treasured ornaments, etc.

Parents of young children should keep on hand, where they can always be found right away, a First Aid Kit and a First Aid Manual, including a chart listing poisons and antidotes and what to do if a child swallows one of these poisons. Ask your doctor to recommend a good First Aid Manual. You may also wish to ask your Public Health Office for a copy of the free booklet, *What to Do When a Keiki Is Hurt.*

Read carefully the section on accident prevention at the back of this bulletin, and take care to accident-proof your home and yard.

Books and Stories:

Looking at picture books and having stories read to him by adults are pleasures every young child should have. This kind of activity does several things for the child. It encourages his powers of observation and imagination. It develops his ability to listen and understand. It awakens his appreciation for books, which will become increasingly important in his life in the years ahead. And as he sits beside you, or on your lap, he basks in the glow of your attention and affection.

As you go through a picture book with a child, make it a practice to teach him the names of the different objects in the pictures. Children between two and three can also learn numbers and the letters of the alphabet if they see them and have them identified often enough. They can also learn to recognize simple words associated with common objects, such as horse, cow, pig, house, boy, girl, car, airplane, etc. Keep in mind, though, that a young child's attention span is short. Do not try to keep him interested in a book or story when he shows signs of restlessness.

Music:

Although the child at this age is too young to learn songs or to play serious musical instruments, he should hear music as a part of his everyday life. And, even at two, he will often respond by moving his body to the rhythm of the music.

Try to provide a variety of good listening music for the child. Include classical music, folk music, vocal music, and dance music. Take advantage of good FM music programs on radio. But avoid very loud music. It distracts young children, and may frighten them.

If you are thinking of investing in a recordplayer at this time, it is better to wait until you can buy one of reasonably good quality, rather than a cheap or toy instrument. And avoid cheap, poorly made records. However, the child at this age will enjoy the type of musical toys he can shake, beat, pull and jingle to produce interesting sounds.

Television:

Parents have a responsibility to control the television watching of their children. It can be a great temptation to use the television set as a means of keeping children occupied. This is not good. A young child needs plenty of fresh air and exercise and he needs to be doing things with other children and adults. Only a very limited amount of his time should be spent watching TV, and he should see only the programs you want him to see. The television programs your child sees should reinforce the values you want him to learn.

It is good practice to watch TV *with* your child. By sharing the experience with him you make it more enjoyable for him and you also have the opportunity to observe the effect of the program on the child.

It is unwise for a young child to see television programs that include violence or those that seem to get him overexcited or upset.

Sex-related interests:

Before he is two, the average child will have discovered and explored his genitals. This is natural, wholesome curiosity. Nothing needs to be done about it. He may also have discovered and enjoy the pleasant feelings associated with touching and handling his genitals. This, also, is normal, and is best ignored. At most, the child should be distracted, and encouraged to enter into some oth-

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er activity. He should not be scolded, slapped or otherwise punished for doing this kind of thing. On the other hand, if a child at this age seems to handle his genitals excessively, be sure there is no cause for irritation or discomfort. You may also wish to ask the child's doctor about this.

It is also not unusual for young children to examine each other's sex organs. This, too, is normal, healthy curiosity, but it is best to discourage it. When children are discovered in this kind of activity, the best policy is to simply get them involved in doing something else.

As soon as he can talk, the child's first sex-related questions are likely to appear. He will probably first want to know why boys and girls are made differently. (Later, he will ask about men and women, too.) He may also want to know where babies come from. (Although this question more usually appears at 3 or 4 years of age, it may come earlier, especially if there is a new baby in the family or the neighborhood.)

Always keep in mind that children's questions about sex-related matters should be answered when they are asked, and should be answered truthfully in simple words the child can understand. However, detailed explanations are not necessary at this age, and would not be understood.

Remember that your goal in all matters to do with your child's sexual development is for him to develop wholesome, positive attitudes about himself and his sexuality.

Reading materials for parents, to help them answer the sex-related questions of young children and understand their young children's sex-related behavior, are included at the end of this bulletin. Most parents will wish to read one or more of these, to be better prepared to meet their young children's needs in this area.

Keep mealtimes pleasant:

Except when he is overtired or not feeling well, the child should now feed himself. He may have special likes and dislikes and he may refuse certain foods. Don't worry about this, and don't force him to eat what he doesn't like or more than he seems to want at a given time.

Go easy with new foods. Offer small portions, and serve them with foods he already knows and likes. Allow plenty of time for him to eat. Don't be concerned if he dawdles, and don't make too much of neatness. Your aims, at this age, are for him to like to eat, to enjoy feeding himself, and to have a balanced diet of nutritious

foods. A healthy child who is offered a well-balanced and varied diet will eat what he needs. Ask your local University of Hawaii Extension Service Office for a free leaflet on good nutrition for young children.

Remember that mealtime should be a social occasion, too. Whenever possible, a young child should take his meals with the rest of the family. Even when he eats alone, he should eat in an attractive setting. A bright table mat and a few flowers in a vase will make his mealtimes more enjoyable.

Keep bedtime peaceful:

The child at this age still needs from 10 to 12 hours sleep at night, and some rest during the day. For many children, right after the noon meal is a good naptime. If he seems to want them, let him have a favorite toy and a picture book or two.

Some children between two and three still need two rest periods or naps during the day. In this case, a mid-morning and mid-afternoon rest schedule usually works out best.

For the child who needs rest during the day, but who does not use these times for sleeping, a mat on the livingroom floor may be an appropriate place for him to rest. Encourage him to lie down and be quiet. Play some soft music for him to enjoy. Tell him a quiet story. He may even fall asleep!

Just before bedtime is not the time to get the child involved in active play, and it is definitely the wrong time for punishment. Bedtime should be preceded by a pleasant, peaceful period. It is a good idea to get him undressed and washed and in his pajamas soon after supper. Then, if you can manage it, play some soft music, and read him a story, but not one of the very exciting or scary type.

Have a regular bedtime for a child. When bedtime comes, be cheerful and firm about it. A child should not get the idea that going to bed is undesirable. This is why putting him to bed as a punishment is always unwise. Let him take soft toys to bed if he wants them. If you have not just finished reading to him he may enjoy a quiet bedtime story after he is tucked in, but don't start this unless you expect to keep it up.

When you have put the child to bed, you should try to keep him there. One more drink of water and one more trip to the bathroom should be the limit. Remind him that he has just had a drink and just been to the bathroom, and say goodnight as though you

mean it. Some children this age are hard to keep down. They climb out of bed as soon as they are in it. When the child does this, just return him to bed—quietly but firmly. Try to avoid harsh measures. At the same time though, consider whether he might be more ready for bed at night if he had less rest during the day. If he is still taking two naps, would one be enough now?

If the child wakes in the night, try to find out the reason for it. Make sure he is comfortable and reassure him that he is safe and you are near.

Begin to teach him manners:

Good manners for the young child will develop when he observes consideration for others being practiced in his own family.

Although he is much too young to be taught rules of etiquette, the two-year-old is quite old enough to learn to say "thank you," and to say "hello" and "goodbye." Don't force him, but show your pleasure when he makes the right response.

However, if he is going through a timid, shy stage, be cautious in how you involve him with strangers. When someone he doesn't know or seldom sees comes to the house, don't feel you have to introduce the child at once. Let him take the lead. When he feels comfortable about it, he will probably want to be noticed and will offer to enter the conversation.

Getting used to other people and places:

However, it is important, at this age, to get the child used to being with new people and to being in new places. Ideally, these occasions take place in the company of his mother or father, or other adult whom he loves and trusts.

If there is a park or playground nearby, take him there so he can see and be with other children. It would not be wise, however, to leave him alone there. In the first place, it would be unsafe for him, and secondly, it is very likely he would be frightened.

It is also good practice to take him with you sometimes when you go shopping, and when you visit the homes of friends and relatives. If you plan to stay longer than half an hour or so, and unless you know there will be plenty of things for him to play with, take along enough of his favorite toys so he can be happily occupied. Keep in mind, also, that he still gets tired easily from walking, so if you are making the trip on foot it will be wise to take his stroller along. When he wants to walk, he can help you push it.

When it is necessary to send a child this age to spend the night away from home, it should be with someone he knows very well and enjoys being with.

Your babysitter:

Anyone you leave your child with should be a person you know and trust. Allow time for your child and the sitter to get acquainted before you leave them together. Even if you expect the child to be asleep while the sitter is there, the sitter should be someone the child knows. If the child should awaken and find a stranger with him, he could be badly frightened. An experience of this kind can have long-lasting consequences. Once he has been frightened in this way, the child may refuse to go to bed or he may wake up crying night after night until he feels sure he can trust you again.

Before you leave, give the sitter as complete information as you can about your ways of doing things. Depending upon the hours the sitter is to care for the child, you will need to explain about feeding, diapering or toileting, where you want the child to play—indoors and out, his favorite toys and storybooks, his nap or bedtime routine, and any other information that may be needed for the child's care.

In addition, the sitter should know the telephone number where you or some other responsible person can be reached, the telephone number of the child's doctor, the telephone numbers of the police and fire department, and the time you plan to return home. If you find you will be getting home later than you had expected, *always* telephone and let the sitter know.

The new baby in the family:

When a new baby is coming into a family where there is a child between 2 and 3 years of age, there are several things parents can do to make things easier for him to accept the newcomer.

First of all, if there are to be any other changes in the child's life, try to get these over with well in advance, so he has made the adjustment. For example, if he is to sleep in a different bed or a different room to make way for the baby, make this change several months before the baby is expected. Similarly, if you are thinking about sending him to nursery school, either get him started well before the new baby comes or else postpone nursery school until several months after the baby's arrival. Otherwise, he may well think you are sending him off to nursery school to get rid of him!

If he is to go to Grandmother's or Auntie's for a few days while Mother is in the hospital, plan carefully to send his favorite toys and other favorite objects with him. On the other hand, if someone is coming to the house to care for him during Mother's absence, plan for this person to come several times in advance, so that the child is not suddenly faced with an unfamiliar person.

About a month before birth is expected, tell the child that the new baby is coming. Explain to him that the baby is growing inside his mother right now, and let him feel the baby move. If he then wants to know how the baby got in there, this is an ideal time to give him this information. (See sex-related interests, page 5.) This is also a good time to get out his baby pictures and go over these with him. If you have saved his baby clothes, get these out too, and explain that tiny things like these are what the new baby will wear.

Once the new baby is home and the family are all together again, be alert to prevent the young child from feeling left out because of the attention being given to the baby. Parents and other relatives, too, should make a special effort at this time to make the child feel loved, wanted, admired, and needed. Let him help in little ways in the baby's care. Most of all, what is needed is reassurance that *he* is just as important and just as much loved as ever. Try to spend some part of each day playing with him and giving him your whole attention.

At the same time, it is necessary to realize that a young child may have strong feelings of jealousy toward the new baby, and that these feelings may, on occasion, take the form of physical aggression. This is one reason a young child and a baby should not be left alone in a room together.

Nursery school:

Some nursery schools accept two-year-olds. Although adjustment to a nursery school environment is usually easier for three-year-olds, the two-year-old child who is physically sturdy and has an outgoing personality can fit into a good nursery school program. Classes for this age group should be small, (six or eight children are enough), and the teachers must be skillful in making very young children feel secure.

Nursery schools should be selected with care in other respects, too. Before making a decision about a nursery school for your child, it is wise to visit the school when it is in session and to look over the premises. You should also have a conference with the

head teacher.

If you are in doubt about when to start your child in nursery school, make an appointment to take him to visit the nursery school of your choice so that you can not only visit with the staff but they can also observe him with other children. In these circumstances, the advice of a qualified teacher as to your child's readiness for nursery school should be accepted.

If your child is especially shy or timid, it is better to postpone nursery school for a while if you can. If for some reason it is necessary for you to enroll the child anyway, consult with the teacher about the advisability of your remaining at school with him for a few days until he gets adjusted. Very often the child will be so enchanted with the activities available to him, and the presence of the other children, that he will soon forget his shyness and join happily into the school's program.

Dressing and clothing:

The child at this age likes to try to dress and undress himself. Whenever possible, allow plenty of time for him to do this, and don't offer him more help than he seems to want or ask for. Easy-on, easy-off clothes encourage him to be independent.

A young child should not have to worry about keeping clean when he is playing. Limit his play clothes to simple wash-and-wear outfits. If you have a washer and dryer, you can cut down expenses by having only two or three play outfits for him at any one time. This makes it less costly to replace his garments as he outgrows them.

Choices should be real:

How often we hear a parent ask a young child if he wants to do this or that, when the parent's mind was clearly made up as to what the child must do. Such false choice-giving is nonsense and only confuses the child. But the two-year-old *is* old enough to begin making some choices, and he should have this opportunity. "Do you want to take your truck or your airplane to Auntie's house?" is a reasonable choice for a two-year-old to make, and once he makes it you should abide by it. Similarly, he can be offered, on occasion, an apple or an orange, a choice of whether to wear his blue sweater or his red one, etc. In this way, he learns to express preferences, and to live with his decisions.

At the same time, when you can't give him a choice—for instance,

when you have to take him away from something he is enjoying–try to do this as tactfully as possible. Remember how it feels to have your own enjoyable activites interrupted!

He learns to go to the toilet by himself:

Between two and three, the child is usually still getting toilet trained. Even if they have learned bowel control, many will still wet themselves, either during the day or in the night. In fact, most children do not gain complete bladder control until about the age of four. They may also still have occasional bowel accidents, but they will probably feel worse about this than you do. It is important to keep a child from feeling guilty or ashamed about any aspect of his toilet training.

Now is the time to begin to teach a child to take care of his own toilet needs, including taking down his own clothes and wiping himself and washing and drying his hands. Remember to compliment him for this, and let him know you are pleased with his progress.

Sometimes the two-year-old who has only used the toilet at home will have trouble "letting go" in a strange toilet. Thus, right from the start of his toilet training, it is a good idea to get a child used to using the toilet in different places.

Fears and worries:

Do not be alarmed if the child at this age exhibits new fears. It is a sign of his increasing awareness of different people, different places, and other things in his environment. He has suddenly begun to take in many things he had not especially noticed before. He may cling to his mother when a stranger appears. He may show fear of men, of animals, of loud noises, of water such as a pool or the ocean, of the doctor, of the dark.

While he normally soon grows out of them, a two-year-old's fears are real. Don't tease him and don't make fun of him. (In fact, teasing a young child is never sensible–he doesn't understand it, and if he *is* afraid it will only make him more so.) Give him reassurance and the feeling that you are close by and will protect him.

Separations from parents may be especially difficult at this age, and should be postponed when possible. If you have to be away from him, make an effort before you go to get him well acquainted with the person who will be caring for him. If he is to stay at another home without you, try to take him there several times before you leave him to stay.

Nightime fears are also common, and may be accompanied by nightmares. When he awakens in a frightened state at night, it is best to sit by his bed until he falls asleep again. Also, if he is obviously terrified about going to bed, the best thing for you to do is put him in his bed at the usual time and then stay with him until he is sleeping soundly. Try not to prolong this procedure beyond the time when he seems to be willing to go to sleep by himself.

Sometimes a night light in his room makes it easier for a young child to relax and go to sleep. You may also find that he will go to sleep more easily if you leave the door to his room open, or partly open, so he does not feel so separated from you.

Occasionally, a child at this age will show other signs of worry and anxiety. He may stutter. He may chew his fingernails. When a child exhibits these behaviors, give real thought to his feelings of security. Is he jealous of a new baby? If you have had to be away from home a lot, he may be worried that you are going to leave him again. Give him extra expressions of love and approval, and try to keep from being away from him at all for a few weeks, when he will normally outgrow these kinds of fears.

One reason an overly conscientious two-year-old may be afraid of going to bed is that he may be afraid he will wet himself in his sleep. For this reason, it is important not to make a fuss when he does wake up wet. On the other hand, it is fine to compliment him when he stays dry.

Discipline:

The child at this age is apt to be balky. He understands more, and sees more possibilities for what he can do. He has his own ideas about what he wants, and he is apt to resist being told what to do.

Parents should discuss together the best way to handle a young child. Remember that it is important and necessary for him to gain independence, and try to give him as little direction as possible. But this doesn't mean you always give in to him and let him have his own way. It is no favor to a child to spoil him. For your sake and his, he should learn to do what is expected of him. But arguing with him or getting cross and speaking to him in an angry voice are wrong approaches to getting his cooperation. If he is especially tired or frustrated, such behavior on your part may even send him into a temper tantrum.

At the same time, don't try to explain too much. He is too young to understand involved reasons for what you want him to do, and

long explanations will confuse him and may worry him. It is also useless and unwise to threaten a two-year-old. He doesn't really understand delayed consequences, and even if he did he probably couldn't control his own behavior without help.

The keys to success in guiding a child of this age are cheerfulness, firmness, helpfulness, and praise. Let him know, in *cheerful* tones, what you expect of him, but be *firm* about it, too. There should be no doubt in his mind as to what you expect him to do. Then, if it seems necessary, *help* him to do what you want him to do. And then, *praise* him for getting the job done!

Punishment:

Discipline and punishment are not the same thing. The aim of discipline is to teach and help the child to behave in socially approved ways. You do this for the child because you love him, and want him to develop into a happy person who gets along well with other people. Good discipline is never punitive. Punishment is an act that is carried out when disciplinary action doesn't work or when the person in charge of the child simply loses patience. The only possible good that can come from punishment is when it teaches the child to discipline his own behavior.

Always remember that, no matter how balky or negative he seems to be, your child loves you and really wants to please you. It is your role to teach him how to do this. When he misbehaves, consider the reason for it. He may be tired, hungry, bored, or just in need of some loving attention.

However, young as he is, he still usually knows when he is behaving in a naughty way, and he feels guilty about it, and he wishes you would stop him. The secret is to keep him from going so far in his naughtiness that you think you *have* to punish him. Whenever possible, distract his attention from whatever he is doing that you don't want him to do, and get him interested in something else. Both of you will feel better when you can handle things in this way.

This does not mean that you never spank him. For example, if he persists in doing something that places him in physical danger, it may seem to you that a little spanking is necessary. But if you find yourself spanking him often, your method of handling him needs to be changed. And never hit, shake, or jerk a young child, and never (unless it is for his physical safety in an emergency) yank a child by the hand or arm. This can do permanent damage to his wrist, elbow, or shoulder joints.

Also, no matter how naughty he has been, NEVER say to a child, "If you aren't good, I won't love you any more." The child knows, and you know too, that he can't be good all the time. But your love is something he MUST be able to count on. He has to know he has your love, no matter what. In this knowledge of your love for him is your real power to guide him and his real power to learn to control himself. For similar reasons, never tell a young child he is naughty or bad. When he misbehaves, you may tell him "*That* is naughty–*that* is bad," but not that *he* is naughty or bad. There is a big difference. It is the difference between asking him to reject something outside himself, and being told *he* is rejected.

If the thing he has done is bad, he can learn to reject it and to keep from doing it. But he must not feel that *he* is bad or that you reject him.

If you do feel you have to punish the child at this age, do it quickly and get it over with. This makes it possible for both of you to be free to express good feelings toward each other again.

Don't put the whole burden on Dad:

The child needs to know his parents are united in their goals for his behavior. The father should share in the disciplining of the child when the occasion for it occurs in the father's presence. However, postponing discipline or punishment with a "wait till your father gets home" is impractical at this age. Relating the act to the punishment should be immediate. Also, it is unfair to both the child and his father to constantly put the father in the role of disciplinarian and punisher.

Don't worry or nag if he sucks his thumb:

Some children still suck their thumbs at three years or even older. Don't nag at or try to shame the child about this. The more direct action you take to get him to stop sucking his thumb, the more likely he is to continue to do it. If the child seems to suck his thumb a lot, be sure he receives plenty of affection and that he has plenty of interesting things to do.

Temper tantrums:

"Temper tantrum" is the common expression for the actions of an angry or frustrated young child, and this behavior usually takes the form of screaming, yelling, and beating on the floor or a wall with hands, feet, and head.

The child at this age does not have the vocabulary to express his frustrations and angers in words, and he lacks the size and strength to take out his feelings in actual aggression against the person or situation that has him upset. It is not usually possible to know the exact cause of a temper tantrum or to predict the set of circumstances that will trigger this kind of explosion.

Although temper tantrums can be hard for the adult to endure, they usually don't last long and they are a way for the child to get his pentup feelings out of his system. Spanking or other forms of aggressive behavior on the part of the adult seldom help and more often simply aggravate the situation. When possible, let him carry on for awhile, without paying much attention to what he is doing, and then try to divert him with a new activity. Pick him up, if you can, and give him a hug, and suggest that you go for a walk together or that he get out a favorite toy. On the other hand, when a temper tantrum occurs in the presence of guests, or in a public place, it is best to physically remove the child to a spot where his behavior will not be disrupting or upsetting to other people.

If temper tantrums are frequent, ask yourself whether the child is feeling all right physically, whether he is getting enough rest, whether he has enough interesting things to do, whether he is being allowed to develop his natural drive for independence, whether he is getting enough attention in other ways.

Regular physical checkups are important:

Ask the doctor how often he wants to see your child for checkups. It may be once or twice a year, or more often. On these occasions, the doctor will check your child's progress and answer your questions. You should also talk over with the doctor the kinds of symptoms or conditions that mean you need to consult the doctor immediately.

Your child should be protected from diseases such as polio, diphtheria, smallpox, whooping cough, mumps, tetanus, and measles. If he has not been protected, ask the doctor about this. If he is protected already, find out from the doctor when he will need boosters.

Care of the teeth:

Now is a good time to start teaching the child to brush his teeth. Get him a small child's toothbrush, and keep it in a place he can reach. However, a child at this age will not have the necessary co-

ordination to do a thorough job of brushing, and your supervision and help will be needed.

Beginning sometime between his second and third birthdays, the child should have his first checkup with the dentist. By starting at this early age, the child will be able to make friends with the dentist and become accustomed to having the dentist examine and clean his teeth. Cavities will be discovered when they are small and can be easily treated.

Many dentists today advise fluorine treatments for children's teeth to help prevent cavities. Ask your child's dentist about this.

MAKE YOUR HOME ACCIDENT-PROOF

If you have not already done so, this is the time to "accident-proof" your home and its surroundings as thoroughly as you can, regardless of the inconvenience. Put all medicines, household cleaners and poisons completely out of reach of anyone but an adult. This includes such items as aspirin, cough syrup, and other medicines and drugs of all kinds, all laundry products, cleaning powders, detergents, starches, and soaps, lye, cleaners for drains, toilets, and ovens, insect and rat poisons, weed killers, plant sprays, floor cleaners and waxes, furniture and auto polish, lighter fluid, kerosene, gasoline, benzene, antifreeze, and cleaning compounds of all kinds including shoe polishes and cleaners and waxes. Such items as tooth powders and pastes, shampoos, home permanent solutions, hair dyes, tonics, and sprays, and other beauty preparations and cosmetics should also be placed out of reach.

And be careful in the disposal of containers of all of these items. Be sure containers are completely empty before they are discarded, and then rinse them to be sure. *Never* store any of the above items in a container that ordinarily holds something else—for example, plant spray or laundry starch in a soft drink bottle, or even cleaner in a cup. Such practices cause many serious accidents.

At the same time, consider the other steps you need to take to make your small child's world safe for him to live in and explore. Inspect your electric cords and discard any that are not in first-class condition. Cover unused wall outlets with plugs made for that purpose, so that the child cannot poke anything into the outlets. There are plug locks that can be installed to keep wall outlets from being pulled, and there are wall outlets in which the openings close automatically when a plug is pulled out. Such items are good investments where there are young children. Do not leave lamps plugged in without bulbs in them. Use gates in front of steps and stairs. Use guards on upstairs windows. Even downstairs windows should be protected in such a way that a small child cannot fall out.

Keep sewing equipment, such as needles, pins, and scissors, where a small child can't get at them. This also applies to knitting needles, crochet hooks, sharp pencils and all other sharp, pointed items.

If you have venetian blinds, cut open the loop at the end of the cords with which you raise and lower the blinds. This will eliminate the danger of the child getting his head caught in the cord.

Keep matches where they cannot be reached even by climbing. Never have loaded firearms or ammunition anywhere at all where a child can get at them. Place broken glass, opened cans, both new and used razor blades, and all sharp household instruments out of reach. Other things that should be kept out of reach are all kinds of tools and power tools. Keep small children well away from all power equipment when it is in use.

Be especially cautious with water. Keep wells, pools, tanks and cisterns firmly covered. Be careful with hot liquids of all kinds. Always turn the handles of pots and saucepans away from the front of the stove. Place hot items in the center of the table, not near the edge. Never leave a pail or kettle of hot water on the floor. Watch to see that electric coffee pots and saucepans cannot be upset by pulling the cord. Keep *all* electric appliances well away from the bathtub or other place where the child is bathed. *Never* leave a small child in water unattended—either in the house or outside. Even shallow pools, such as inflated plastic play pools, can be dangerous. When at the beach or lake or around a swimming pool, a child should wear a life jacket until he can swim at least 100 feet. Life jackets should always be worn when in boats.

Never leave a young child alone where there is a lighted stove, a burning fireplace or grill or hibachi, a luau light, a lighted candle, or a lamp using oil or gas.

Be extremely cautious when turning into and driving or backing out of driveways.

Keep young children away from poisonous plants.

A low table and chair are safer than a high chair for a small child. If you use a high chair for him, it should have a broad base so it won't easily tip over, a latch to keep him from raising the tray, and a safety strap to hold him in.

And use special precautions when you take the small child on outings. A carriage or stroller should have a harness for a child

who is at the climbing stage. Use a safety harness or seat belt for a child in a car, even on short trips. Many serious accidents are caused by letting young children sit or stand on car seats without this protection. *Never* leave a young child alone in a house, in a parked carriage or stroller, or in a parked car. Keep young children away from strange animals.

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